“Do not be afraid...

I am bringing you good news of great joy...”

-Luke 2:10
So much of the sense of longing, anticipation, and hope that the Hebrew prophets express goes right past us. The people to whom Zephaniah is writing seem to be so caught up in their own self-interest, so disinterested in following God’s ways that they are headed to a life of exile and oppression—if not for them, then for their descendants. But like in so many prophetic writings, God gives words of hope that would have spoken powerfully and lovingly to those living in exile who had lost everything.

Our lives, on the other hand are quite distant from those of Zephaniah's original audience. On the whole, we live quite comfortable, privileged lives, and our society has enough resources to deal with almost any calamity that might come our way. We can put our trust in our own personal intelligence and ability and in our institutions for protection and provision.

So, when we come to our new year—in the Church, about a month before the calendar turns—with the First Sunday of Advent, on November 29, I wonder if we can try to focus on that hope. Advent is a time of preparation, anticipation, and, yes, hope. Advent offers poignant messages of the hope we have in the coming of Jesus, through whom God renews us, quiets us, and soothes us in his love.

Beyond hoping that the family will all arrive on time or that the roast will be a perfect medium rare, our Advent Scriptures call us to real hope. They call us to recognize that God will heal and restore us and all people to our relationship with him, and that God incarnate empowers us with that hope.

When the world is becoming its darkest, approaching the winter solstice, we long for and prepare to welcome the light of Christ. We need this light and this hope in our lives, especially when we start believing that our worldly resources and abilities are enough to save us. We need to be this light and this hope because our world really is a dark place desperately in need of God’s renewing, soothing love shining through us.

The Rev. James R. Harlan, Rector
With so many activities planned at Bethesda during Advent and Christmas, it’s the perfect time to invite a friend to enjoy our festivities and experience God’s love in our wonderful church.

You might consider asking a neighbor or co-worker to come to our International Potluck Dinner on Wednesday, November 18. Maybe you have a friend who would enjoy singing carols at our Christmas Concert and Community Carol Sing on Monday, December 14. Do you know someone who would like to help the homebound by volunteering at our annual Homebound Luncheon on Wednesday, December 30? Consider, especially, encouraging people you meet to attend our beautiful services to more fully experience the joy of this holiday season.

The Bethesda Catalog, which can be found at bbts.org, gives details on our many upcoming events. We hope that you will take part in all that is happening and invite a guest join you in celebrating this season at Bethesda.

For More Information
Renee Boger-Cheifet, Communications Coordinator | (561) 655-4555 x111 | boger@bbts.org
Becky Myers, Chair | communications@bbts.org
Ways to Give at The Church Mouse

Let The Church Mouse help you get in the Thanksgiving mood by giving of your time, talent, and treasures.

Volunteering is such a wonderful way to express your time and talent. This season, get involved by giving a couple of hours of your time. We certainly can use the help and we are always happy to add another friendly face to our team.

Donations are essential and desperately needed this season in order to fill our 4,500 square-foot shop. We are always ready to accept new or gently-used items such as housewares, women’s and men’s clothing, artwork, vintage jewelry and accessories, handbags, and furniture as well as antiques. The Mouse will gladly arrange convenient and free pick up of all your donated treasures. Detailed receipts will be mailed, and donations of salable items are tax deductible.

Shopping at the Mouse means you are helping those less fortunate in our community. 100 percent of the proceeds from The Church Mouse provides funds for Bethesda’s Outreach Ministry. So, please come by and shop from our ever-changing array of quality items for sale. Below are a few items that you can currently find at the Mouse:

- Fine cast-bronze sculptures of James Earle Fraser’s “End of the Trail” and Frederic Remington’s “Mountain Man”
- Furnishings ranging from 18th century Neoclassical pieces to Mid-Century Modern pieces by Herman Miller and Kartell to quality contemporary furniture
- Designer clothing and accessories including Chanel, Chloé, Emilio Pucci, Mary McFadden, Valentino, and Yves Saint Laurent

Whether you are volunteering, encouraging a colleague to drop off a donation, or shopping with your friends and family—you are giving.

Our resale shop is open 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. We close at noon on Wednesday, November 25, and Thursday, December 24.

For More Information

Coy Riestra, Manager of The Church Mouse and The Shoppe | (561) 659-2154 | churchmouse@bbts.org
Fred Staley, Associate for Administration | (561) 655-4555 x102 | staley@bbts.org
The major decisions, staff changes, and planned improvements since May, and the financial position of Bethesda are summarized below (this was the first commitment from the 2015 Ask & Inform initiative).

**Leadership Changes:**
- There have been two changes to the Vestry resulting from the departure of Gail Knisely for family reasons; Susan Keenan has been appointed as Clerk, and Paul Coombs was elected to fulfil the remaining term (until January 2017). There have been several changes to the leaders of the Rector’s committees and special working groups, so here is a complete list:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chair</th>
<th>Co/Vice-Chair</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worship</td>
<td>Daniel Koinis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Bill Eckberg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bethesda Cares</td>
<td>Bobbie Leek, <em>Vestry</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Outreach</td>
<td>Pat Reichenbacher, <em>Vestry</em></td>
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<td>Fellowship &amp; Hospitality</td>
<td>Frank Young, <em>Vestry</em></td>
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<td>Evangelism &amp; Communications</td>
<td>Becky Myers</td>
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<td>Personnel</td>
<td>Don McKenna, <em>Vestry</em></td>
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<td>Stewardship</td>
<td>Paul Coombs, <em>Vestry</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>Pat Reichenbacher, <em>Vestry</em></td>
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**Vestry decisions:**
- All work on the ongoing façade restoration has been funded in full to date, *although we need a further $95,000 to complete the project.*
- A new Cloud-based IT system is being implemented for Stewardship (to provide more accurate reporting) and Membership (as part of providing an updated membership directory, to assist with tracking our ever growing number of volunteers, and to help to improve communications).
- A new carpet for the Church Hall has been installed, and the Church and Rectory have been treated for termites. The final parts of the new Garden Chapel are being installed.
- The Vestry met in late October with the chairs of all the Rector’s committees to review the priorities for 2016, including many of the suggestions from the 2015 Ask & Inform initiative (an update will be provided at the Annual Meeting in January).

**Staff changes:**
- The vacant position of Director of Stewardship and the role of Associate for Ministry Development are being reorganized. Mother Kimberly is to become the Associate for Stewardship & Outreach. A new priest is being recruited and will take responsibility for Education and Bethesda Cares, with Fellowship & Hospitality being reallocated to the Associate for Administration, Fred Staley. It is hoped to make all these changes before Christmas.

**Finances:**
- Costs remain under budget (as of September 30).
- We are within $2,000 of achieving our target for annual pledges—thank you to everyone who has made a pledge.
- *We need a further $237,000 in unpledged (or preferably, pledged) gifts this year* to meet our target (this number has increased as some unpledged gifts were converted to pledges). We hope that you will consider Bethesda as we move towards Christmas and the end of the tax year; none of us wants to limit our wonderful ministries or defer building repairs and maintenance.

**For More Information**
Fred Staley, *Associate for Administration* | (561) 655-4555 x102 | staley@bbts.org
Paul Coombs, *Chair* | give@bbts.org
Worship
Advent & Christmas Season

With the fast-approaching Advent and Christmas seasons, there are many extra services and concerts. Here are a few of the highlights you’ll want to mark on your calendars and attend.

A Service of Advent Lessons and Carols
Sunday, December 6 | 4:00 p.m.
Sixteen years after introducing the now-famous Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols to King’s College, Cambridge, the Dean, Eric Milner-White, created this service for Advent. He insisted that there was need for a service which “made a preparation for the coming of our Lord to this earth far more vivid and eager.” Advent carols and anthems are sung by the Bethesda Choir, and many of the great hymns of Advent are sung by the congregation. There is no recital preceding this service, but Prelude music will begin at approximately 3:50 p.m. An offering will be received.

Christmas Concert and Community Carol Sing
Monday, December 14 | 7:30 p.m.
Ring in the upcoming Christmas season with one of the area’s most popular Christmas concerts! The Bethesda Choir performs with some of the finest instrumentalists in South Florida, and the audience sings many favorite Christmas carols with the excitement of full orchestra accompaniment. Come early to get a seat! A requested donation of $15 will be received at the door.

A Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols
Sunday, December 27 | 11:00 a.m.
The Bethesda Choir leads this traditional service, made famous by the annual live broadcast from King’s College, Cambridge, England. Each of the lessons is read by a different lector, and each lesson is followed with music to illustrate the lesson and the 12 days of Christmas. At 9:00 that morning, we have a service of congregational lessons and carols with Eucharist. An offering will be received.

Boar’s Head & Yule Log Festival
Saturday, January 2 | 3:30 p.m.—Parish Performance
Sunday, January 3 | 2:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.—Public performances
The Palm Beach Pipes and Drums, Beefeaters, Sprites, Shepherds, the Three Kings and their Pages, Mary and Joseph, Flag Bearers, Jesters, the Herald, King Wenceslas and his Page, a Brass Quintet, the mighty Austin organ, and the Bethesda Choir . . . all will be in place as our festival takes place again this year. The Saturday performance—which is not publicized and, in a very real sense, is a dress rehearsal—is meant for our parishioners. A requested donation of $15 will be received at the door for all performances.

For More Information
Harold Pysher, Associate for Music and Liturgy | (561) 655-4555 x103 | pysher@bbts.org
Regine Reimann, Worship and Pastoral Care Coordinator | (561) 655-4555 x117 | reimann@bbts.org
Daniel Koinis, Chair | worship@bbts.org
**2015-2016 Advent & Christmas Services**

**Sunday, November 29 — First Sunday of Advent**
- PP Parking Permitted from 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.—
  - 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Homily
  - 9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Homily
  - 9:05 a.m. Children’s Worship, Sunday School Hall
  - 10:00 a.m. Christian Education for all ages
  - 10:00 a.m. Adult Forum, Parish Hall
  - 10:00 a.m. Lectionary Based Bible Study, Guild Room
  - 11:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Homily

**Tuesday, December 1**
- 7:15 a.m. Bible Study, Guild Room
- 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

**Wednesday, December 2**
- 12:05 p.m. Holy Eucharist and Healing

**Sunday, December 6 — Second Sunday of Advent**
- PP Parking Permitted from 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.—
  - 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Homily
  - 9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Homily
  - 9:00 a.m. Children’s Worship, Sunday School Hall
  - 10:00 a.m. Christian Education for all ages
  - 10:00 a.m. Adult Forum, Parish Hall
  - 10:00 a.m. Lectionary Based Bible Study, Guild Room
  - 11:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Homily
  - PP 4:00 p.m. A Service of Advent Lessons and Carols

**Tuesday, December 8**
- 7:15 a.m. Bible Study, Guild Room
- 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

**Wednesday, December 9**
- 12:05 p.m. Holy Eucharist and Healing

**Sunday, December 13 — Third Sunday of Advent**
- PP Parking Permitted from 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.—
  - 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Homily
  - 9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Homily
  - 9:00 a.m. Children’s Worship, Sunday School Hall
  - 10:00 a.m. Sunday School—Christmas Fashion Show
  - 10:00 a.m. Adult Forum, Parish Hall
  - 10:00 a.m. Lectionary Based Bible Study, Guild Room
  - 11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer, Holy Eucharist, and Homily
  - 12:15 p.m. Church Lecture Tour

**Monday, December 14**
- PP 7:30 p.m. Christmas Concert and Community Carol Sing

**Tuesday, December 15**
- 7:15 a.m. Bible Study, Guild Room
- 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

**Wednesday, December 16**
- 12:05 p.m. Holy Eucharist and Healing

**Sunday, December 20 — Fourth Sunday of Advent**
- PP Parking Permitted from 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.—
  - 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Homily
  - 9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Homily, and Healing
  - 9:00 a.m. Children’s Worship, Sunday School Hall
  - 11:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Homily, and Healing

**Monday, December 21**
- PP 10:00 a.m. Christmas Pageant Rehearsal
  - Open to all children

**Tuesday, December 22**
- 7:15 a.m. Bible Study, Guild Room
- 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

**Wednesday, December 23**
- 12:05 p.m. Holy Eucharist and Healing

**Thursday, December 24 — Christmas Eve**
- PP 14:00 p.m. Christmas Pageant, Homily, and Holy Eucharist
- PP 6:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist and Homily with music by members of the Bethesda Choir
- PP 10:30 p.m. Festal Eucharist and Homily with music for Choir, Congregation, and brass ensemble

**Friday, December 25 — Christmas Day, Office Closed**
- PP Parking Permitted from 7:30 a.m. to 11:05 p.m.—
  - 9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Homily
  - 11:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Homily with music by the Bethesda Choir

**Sunday, December 27 — First Sunday after Christmas**
- PP Parking Permitted from 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.—
  - 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Homily
  - 9:00 a.m. Congregational Lessons and Carols with Holy Eucharist
  - 10:00 a.m. Wassail, Parish Hall
  - 11:00 a.m. A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

**Wednesday, December 30**
- 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
- PP 12:05 p.m. Homebound Service with Holy Eucharist
- PP 12:45 p.m. Homebound Luncheon, Parish Hall

**Saturday, January 2**
- 3:30 p.m. Boar’s Head Festival—Parish Performance

**Sunday, January 3 — Second Sunday after Christmas**
- PP Parking Permitted from 7:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.—
  - 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Homily
  - 9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Homily
  - 11:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Homily
  - 2:00 p.m. Boar’s Head Festival—Public performance
  - 4:30 p.m. Boar’s Head Festival—Public performance

- Nursery care available for newborns through age 2.

† Overflow seating, with video simulcast, will be available in the Parish Hall for these Christmas Eve services.

**Parking:** Persons attending Sunday services and/or events at Bethesda will be allowed to park on Barton Avenue—from the ocean to Central Avenue—and on South County Road without receiving a ticket. See below.

PP Parking permitted on 200 block of Barton Avenue and Barton Avenue is one-way.

P Parking permitted on 200 block of Barton Avenue.

*Blessed Christmas to all!*

*from the Clergy and Staff*
Bienvenido, Benvenuto, Bienvenue, willkommen, all mean the same thing—welcome—only in different languages. The Fellowship & Hospitality Committee would like to invite you to feel welcome to attend our International Potluck Dinner on Wednesday, November 18. It will be a lovely evening under the stars in the Garth. You will enjoy international food, wine, music, prizes, and especially fellowship!

At Bethesda, we have such a diverse group from all different backgrounds, and you can clearly taste it at this potluck. A special dish, a treasured recipe passed down from your family, or even a favorite restaurant where you can pick up a tasty take-out order, is exactly the idea for the event. We are asking you to sign up and bring your worldwide dish to share. There will even be a contest for the best dish. We need guests to bring an appetizer, salad, entrée, or dessert.

For those looking to lend a helping hand, volunteers are needed. If you wish to help prepare, warm, and serve food, please contact us at fellowship@bbts.org.

It is a great opportunity to bring a guest and invite them to your church community. We hope to see you there at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 18, in the Garth!

For More Information

April Lawrence, Stewardship and Membership Coordinator | (561) 655-4555 x112 | april@bbts.org
John Archer, Co-Chair | Frank Young, Co-Chair | fellowship@bbts.org
Bethesda Cares

The Heart of Noreen McKeen

Her smile lights up a room. In fact, it lights up many rooms, including the chapel at Noreen McKeen. Hers is a quiet ministry, very much behind the scenes. Most people don’t know it’s even being done on our behalf. Month after month, year after year, for over thirty-one years Lory Volk has been showing up every other Thursday (Holy Trinity takes the alternate weeks) for our 11:15 a.m. service at Noreen McKeen. She makes her rounds, going room to room, looking for the people who regularly attend. Sometimes you’ll see her pushing their wheelchairs to the chapel. She gathers longtime members of our church, members of Holy Trinity, and those who belong to different denominations or have no church affiliation, always looking for new people to invite. She doesn’t exclude the caregivers and staff. She welcomes them, too, and encourages them to come take part in our service. She acts as Usher and Eucharistic Minister and then assists in getting everyone back to their rooms or wherever they may be heading next.

What an extraordinary gift she has been to those people and to us! Now it is time for her to let someone else take the helm. And that, too, is an important and healthy part of her ministry, because in doing so with gratitude and grace, she is making room for someone else within our community to offer his or her own time and talent. So, the next time you see Lory, please let her know how very much you appreciate her good work.

Lory Volk retires from 31 years of dedicated volunteer service

Not too long ago several of our staff members attended the service to see the ministry first hand. The residents were delighted! The rhythm of this special time goes something like this: Everyone is greeted as they arrive. Then the brief service begins with the opening sentences and gospel reading, followed by a short homily. After the Eucharistic prayer, communion is brought to each person where they receive the bread and wine, or the bread only, or a blessing. Afterward, everyone is wished well as they leave the chapel and continue their day. As they leave, it is not uncommon to hear someone say how much it means to them that we come and how much they love us and love being with us. That’s when we know we truly are Jesus’ disciples in this world. It’s also when we realize that we receive so much more than we give.

For More Information

The Rev. Kimberly Still, Associate for Ministry Development | (561) 655-4555 x1104 | still@bbts.org
Regine Reimann, Worship and Pastoral Care Coordinator | (561) 655-4555 x1117 | reimann@bbts.org
Bobbie Leek, Chair | care@bbts.org
After many years of leadership with our St. George’s sandwich-making ministry, Jo Ann Sears has decided to devote more time with other Bethesda Outreach ministries including our Mentor Program at Lake Worth High School, assisted by our partner agency, Take Stock in Children. She and her co-mentors, Susan Barnhart and Tanner Rose, meet every week with three students. The students are bright and eager to break free of the poverty and homelessness that has faced them all of their young lives, and are college-bound. However, Jo Ann will continue to be a sandwich volunteer once a month. Thank you Jo Ann for your dedication and for always seeing that the team was fully staffed to get the job accomplished every Friday morning.

Basil Burke, a relatively new member at Bethesda, has graciously accepted to take the reins of this important outreach ministry. Born in Jamaica and having migrated to Florida in 1969, he attended Bethesda Life with his family and embraced our Outreach programs with a passion. His active volunteer participation is not only in sandwich-making, but assisting with the Backpack Program, Palm Beach Empty Bowls, and volunteering at the Feeding the Hungry Program at Village Baptist Church. We are grateful for Basil and thank him for answering the call to serve.

We invite you to meet Basil and help him make 200 sandwiches for St. George’s Center every Friday morning at 8:00 a.m. in the Bethesda kitchen to help feed the hungry in our community!

For More Information

The Rev. Kimberly Still, Associate for Ministry Development | (561) 655-4555 x104 | still@bbts.org
Pat Reichenbacher, Chair | outreach@bbts.org
One of the most treasured traditions at Bethesda is the annual Christmas Pageant, where our young people re-enact the nativity story from the Gospel of Luke on Christmas Eve night. For those of you who haven’t attended Bethesda lately, we have returned to a more traditional pageant format over the last two years, where the children and youth of Bethesda interpret the biblical story through graceful movement and blocking while the biblical story is read by older youth. The goal is to have a service that is more like witnessing a living painting of the birth of Christ rather than the traditional play format with dialogue and jarring action.

This year we will continue our tradition with a slight difference that you may or may not spot right away. While we honor the hard work of all of our past volunteers and the work that they’ve put into making our Bethesda Christmas Pageant what it is, there are some places that could use a slight upgrade. One of those areas is the state of our costumes. We’ve had years of shepherds journeying from their fields and angels singing around the manger, and all of that continued use has added up to some loose threads, rips, and patches. This year we have a goal not only to update our shepherds with stylish new threads, but we also hope to be able to provide each of our angels with their very own set of wings. We’ll be looking for volunteers to help cut, glue, sew, and more over the coming weeks to make this vision a reality.

As part of our costume renovations, we’re going to be hosting a special Sunday experience for all of our children and youth participating in the Christmas Pageant this year. On Sunday, December 13, during the usual Sunday School hour (10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.) when we would typically do fittings for all of our young people, assign them an outfit, and send them on their way, we’re going to be adding something new. This will be the first year that Bethesda will set up a Christmas costume fashion runway for our young people to strut their stuff and show off their new looks. Once children and youth have picked their outfits, we’ll gather in the Garth where we’ll have a runway set up for children to walk up and down in their new outfits while paparazzi catch it all on film. It’s a fun, modern element to our usual pageant fittings, and we can’t wait to see all of the children in their new outfits.

The service featuring the Christmas Pageant is Thursday, December 24, at 4:00 p.m. There will be one rehearsal for the full cast on Monday, December 21, at 10:00 a.m. All are invited to participate!
Blessing of the Animals